

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 080344
ORIGIN IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /015 R

66011

DRAFTED BY:IO/AGR:PJBYRNES

APPROVED BY:IO/SA:TBROWN

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R 290503Z MAR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 4853

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FOLLOWING REPEAT BANJUL 492 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ABIDJAN,
BRUSSELS, DAKAR, AND ROME DATED MAR 28, 1978.

QUOTE:

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AIDAC

BRUSSELS FOR USEEC

ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL VISIT TO THE GAMBIA

1. SAOUMA DESCENDED ON THE GAMBIA 27 FEBRUARY TO 1 MARCH, A DAY
AHEAD OF SCHEDULE, ATTENDED BY K. WAGNER OF OSRO, S. DE MISTURA,
ATTACHE DE CABINET, AND G. HAZOUME, REGIONAL INFORMATION OFFICER.

2. HIS VISIT HAD BEEN PRECEDED BY TWO FAO VISITS TO WORK OUT
DETAILED ITINERARY. THIS ITINERARY, AGREED TO BY FAO ADVANCE

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MEN AND GOTG, WAS ABRUPTLY CHANGED BY DG ONE DAY BEFORE ARRIVAL.
ALTERATIONS INCLUDED: CANCELLATION OF DINNER BY VICE PRESIDENT;
CANCELLATION OF UP-RIVER VISIT TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, THE
GAMBIA'S MAIN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION PROJECT; AND CANCELLATION
OF COURTESY CALL ON UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE.

3. DG AVOIDED MEETING ANY REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER DONORS OR

OF MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO FAO: EEC, UK, US REPRESENTATIVES WERE NOT INCLUDED ON ANY OCCASION. WORD REACHES US THAT THIS WAS AT PREFERENCE OF DG, AND UNDP RESREP MADE PUBLIC DISCLAIMER OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF DG VISIT AT RECENT DONOR MEETING.

4. DG REPORTEDLY SUMMONED UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO HOTEL ONE EVENING TO DISCUSS UNDP PROGRAM IN THE GAMBIA AND GAVE HIM ONLY 15 MINUTES. INSTEAD OF DISCUSSING GAMBIAN DEVELOPMENT AND UNDP AND FAO INVOLVEMENT, DG PREFERRED TALK ABOUT HUNTING, A TOPIC OF MUTUAL INTEREST TO DG AND RESREP. RESREP REPORTS DG WAS NOT INTERESTED IN SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION THIS OCCASION.

5. REPORTS FROM RELIABLE SOURCES INDICATE THAT DURING CALL ON PRESIDENT JAWARA, CURRENTLY PRESIDENT PRO TEM OF CILSS, PRESIDENT THANKED DG FOR FAO AND WFP RESPONSE TO DROUGHT EMERGENCY. SAOUMA IS REPORTED TO HAVE RESPONDED THAT FAO WILL DO ITS UTMOST TO LOCATE FOOD AID TO MEET CILSS STATES DECLARED NEEDS, BUT MADE SNIDE REMARK TO THE EFFECT THAT HE WAS NOT MUCH INTERESTED IN SEEKING ADDITIONAL USAID SUPPORT TO THIS EFFORT (PRESUMABLY HE MEANT VIA INCREASED USG ALLOCATIONS TO WFP, BUT WE ARE NOT CLEAR ON THIS POINT-- HE MIGHT HAVE MEANT BILATERAL-- BECAUSE AID DONATIONS QUOTE REQUIRE SOMETHING IN RETURN AND COME WITH STRINGS UNQUOTE. HIS EXACT WORDING MAY HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT, BUT WE ARE ASSURED THIS WAS THE THRUST. PRESIDENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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JAWARA IGNORED THIS COMMENT. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION WHY SAOUMA CHOSE THIS OCCASION TO COMMENT ON USG AND USAID.

6. SAOUMA, IN A PUBLIC MEETING WITH SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE IN THE MINISTER'S OFFICE, SHARPLY UPBRAIDED THE TEMPORARY WFP REPRESENTATIVE AND TOLD HIM-- AFTER THUMPING HIS FIST ON THE ARM OF THE CHAIR--TO KEEP QUIET.

7. SAOUMA'S REVISED ITINERARY PROVIDED SOME ADDITIONAL FREE TIME. HE USED THIS TO INITIATE CONTACTS WITH LOCAL LEBANESE-ORIGIN BUSINESSMEN AND EVEN HOSTED A SMALL SOCIAL EVENT FOR THEM FOR ABOUT 2 HOURS AT HIS HOTEL. HIS PREFERENCE FOR LOCAL LEBANESE BUSINESSMEN WAS SUCH THAT HE SPENT ONLY THE BRIEFEST OF TIME AT AIRPORT DEPARTURE WITH GOTG AND UNDP/FAO PERSONNEL WHO WENT TO SEE HIM OFF; AND SPENT BULK OF TIME THERE WITH NEW-FOUND LEBANESE ACQUAINTANCES.

8. FROM THE SUBSTANTIVE POINT OF VIEW, SAOUMA REPORTED THAT FAO HAD SECURED DOLLARS 1.2 MILLION OF EEC FUNDS FOR PURCHASE OF SEEDS AND PESTICIDES FOR THE GAMBIAN DROUGHT. EEC REPRESENTATIVE INDICATES HE WAS UNAWARE OF THIS. DG SIGNED FAO PROJECT

DOCUMENT FOR MANR AND MADE PROMISES OF OTHER ASSISTANCE
ACTIVITIES. TOTAL FOR LATTER WAS ABOUT DOLLARS 1 MILLION,
BUT THIS SUM INCLUDES PROJECT PROPOSALS ALREADY UNDER DISCUSSION
(THAT IS, LITTLE NEW).

9. GOTG MADE FORMAL SUGGESTION THAT NEW FAO REPRESENTATIVE
ESTABLISH HIS OFFICE IN THE RELATIVELY SPACIOUS UNDP OFFICE
IN ORDER TO CONSERVE OFFICE SPACE. SAOUMA RESPONDED BY IN-
DICATING THAT FAO REPRESENTATIVE MAY BE LOCATED NEAR (BUT NOT
IN) UNDP/BANJUL BUILDING TO FACILITATE COORDINATION.

10. REGRET DELAY IN THIS REPORT, BUT AID OFFICER WAS OUT OF
COUNTRY ON MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS.

WYGANT UNQUOTE COOPER
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE080344
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: IO/AGR:PJBARNES
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780135-1048
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780312/aaaaakds.tel
Line Count: 136
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: eec1d1ba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3157151
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL VISIT TO THE GAMBIA
TAGS: AORG, OVIP, GA, FAO, (SAOUMA, EDOUARD)
To: USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/eec1d1ba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014